

**INITIAL ROUND OF CONSOLIDATED BOE QUESTIONS ON THE
RECOMMENDED FY19 OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGET**

January 12, 2018

The following questions were submitted by the BOE for written responses by the Administration. The questions have been organized into topic groups and are listed exactly as they were submitted. We have not identified which BOE member submitted which question. Designated administrators have written responses, sometimes providing a single response to multiple questions if a common answer suffices. Authors for the responses are noted by first name, solely as a resource to BOE Members.

The topics are arranged alphabetically as follows:

- Athletics
- Capital Budget
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Digital Learning & Technology
- Enrollment
- Facilities
- General Questions
- Personnel – Contracts & SSP 2.0
- Schools-HES
- Schools-WIS
- Schools-WMS
- Schools-WHS
- Security
- SPED & PPS
- Text Corrections
- Transportation

TOPIC: ATHLETICS

1. Is this a good time to be discussing a pay for play to each athlete to go towards turf replacement? I don't think this is currently the case.

ANSWER: This has occurred for many years. \$10 of each participant fee is deposited into the Turf Replacement Fund. This is also referenced in the budget book on page 213 under Athletics and page 302 under the Capital Budget. [RICH/MARK]

2. Page 149 - facility/athletic rental fee of \$17,500 for 2017-2018 - are we on target to meet this and if not, should the 2018-2019 budget be adjusted?

ANSWER: Yes, we are on target to meet the \$17,500 for 2017-18. We anticipate no additional rental income beyond this amount. Facility rentals do not generate any net revenue. As a result, any effort to increase rentals would also generate corresponding increases in expenses as well. [RICH/MARK]

3. Page 149 - athletic participation fees - when was the last time we adjusted this fee? If a family maxes out at \$400 for the year, do we still pay the \$10 turf and \$10 athletic facility fee?

ANSWER: The participation fee increased from \$75 to \$100 in the 2015-16 school year. The family cap went from \$300 to \$400 at the same time. \$20 is taken from every \$100 payment we receive with \$10 going to the Turf Replacement Fund and \$10 to the athletic facilities, but no money is put towards either the Fund or facility needs from family resources once the cap is reached or their fee waived due to hardship. [RICH/MARK]

4. Page 32 - #9201 & 9202 - Participation Fees & Gate Receipts - Why are these expected to go down? (see also pg 149)

ANSWER: The reduction is due to the line item transfer from Special Revenue Account, shown on p. 213. The amount available within this account has decreased and will continue to decrease going forward. This was not a recurring source of revenue. [RICH/MARK]

5. Page 212 - Interscholastic Athletics, Team Expenses - please provide current year for comparison. Possible to take 2018 Budget and update (at least for number of participants) the actual data for 2018? How many teams have a large portion of players double rostered on another level, i.e. freshmen playing on freshman and junior varsity team? What is the threshold for reducing the number of teams?

ANSWER: There is no way to give the actual data for 2018 as it hasn't occurred yet. I have put my best estimate on the overall spreadsheet using actual numbers from the past two years. Many teams double roster players but this is not always due to lack of numbers. There are many instances where it is in the best interest of the athlete and the sport to double roster players and even sports where cuts are made will often times have double rostered players. There is no hard number threshold for determining how many levels we will run as every sport is so different with the numbers needed to compete. We do pay attention to the number of athletes in the program and will not run a lower level if we don't have the numbers to compete. I am happy to discuss it further if there is a specific sport of concern. [MARK]

6. Page 274 sound system for softball field - please confirm this project was delayed? Have there been discussions with Weston Little League - Softball to help fund the project?

ANSWER: Yes this will be delayed until the summer. Materials will be covered under maintenance materials. There have been no discussions with Weston Little League. [RICH/JOE]

7. Page 310 Insert in description about Sports and extracurriculars at WHS, that there are not 910 distinct students, that x are multiple sports players. How many distinct students?

ANSWER: In the 2016-17 school year we had 559 unique athletes. In 2015-16 there were 591 unique athletes. I can estimate how many unique athletes we would have in 2018-19, but it truly would be a guess as some of the multiple sport athletes participate in two sports while others participate in three. That being said, over the last 12 years we have had 68.4% of our student population participating in at least one sport. Given the anticipated enrollment at the high school of 810 we could estimate approximately 550 to 560 unique students will participate in at least one sport in the 2018-19 school year. [MARK]

8. Page 206 & Page 25 - Says we are not adding the two assistant varsity coaches this year as usual, but hope to return to adding them next year; at what point do you anticipate being done adding them? (eg what is the goal number)

ANSWER: The only tier one sports without assistant varsity coaches are cheerleading and field hockey. There are tier two sports without assistant varsity coaches such as boys and girls golf, boys and girls tennis, boys and girls cross country however. [MARK]

9. Page 208 - Have we found a home/program for our hockey players since Westport opted not to include us?

ANSWER: No, we have not but we are continually searching for a home for them. There has been some movement in a couple of existing Co-Ops and I am in talks with other AD's in hopes of finding a way to include our boys if at all possible. [MARK]

10. Page 212 - Does girls golf roll into boys golf because 10 athletes seems like a low number to have a team (similar question regarding the 3 girls hockey players - are they in a co-op with another town?)

ANSWER: Girls Ice Hockey does Co-Op with Notre Dame of Fairfield and the Milford schools and the athletes cover all of their own expenses. Girls Golf is its own team. Ten players is more than enough to run a golf program; only five players compete in a varsity match for golf. [MARK]

11. On page 210 there is a mention of a reduction of police costs for the home game vs. Barlow. Is that because the game is away this year?

ANSWER: No, we still have police coverage at all football games. We have reduced police coverage at our other sports to only home Joel Barlow games as needed. [MARK]

TOPIC: CAPITAL BUDGET

12. Page 303 - Footnote #1 - All of the other footnotes are "plain fact" sentences. Would it be possible to re-word this one?

ANSWER: I believe the footnote is a plain fact. We have discussed the Knee Wall failure with three architects (Silver Petrucelli, KG&D and Archer Engineering). All have indicated to us that the primary reason for the failure of the knee wall is the interior gutters and that the most appropriate resolution to the knee wall repair would be exterior gutters. Additionally we have spoken with Jacunski Humes, who was the Towns selection for a replacement architect, and they have indicated that exterior gutters is the most optimal solution to address the knee walls and any solution that involves interior gutters would be significantly more expensive. However, given that the cost proposals we have received are for exterior gutters, which was the recommended solution by all three firms and the town's architect Jacunski Humes, the only cost proposal we could put forward would be for that type of repair. [RICH]

13. Page 302 - Line item for removal of two oil tanks is listed as \$125,000. However, similar line items in past years listed the cost as \$125,000 for removal and replacement? Why is the cost the same if we are just removing and not replacing these particular tanks? Also, what is different about these tanks that we are not replacing them?

ANSWER: The tanks listed in FY 20 for removal are larger tanks than the tanks removed at Hurlbutt previously. These two tanks are 25,000 gallon tanks in total. The tank that was removed and replaced at HES this summer was a 6000 gallon tank and cost \$78,000 (the two other bids were \$84k and \$176k). We anticipate that the cost to remove and replace these two tanks, based on initial feedback this year from vendors who bid on the HES tank, to be closer to \$135,000. We slotted removal only in FY 20 at \$125,000, since initial feedback for the costs of removal only is greater than anticipated. There is not a large variance between removing and replacing vs. just removing because we have to remove the oil tank and the lines going into the oil tanks, which comes with an added cost. When the FY 20 budget is prepared, we will solicit new quotes with revised prices based on the direction the BOE decides regarding removal only or removal and replace. Given no direction has been decided and this is not a FY 19 issue, we are tentatively placing \$125,000 as the amount of removal and no replacement.[RICH]

14. Page 302 - #8 - I would like to re-visit the discussion of the removal/replacement vs removal of the oil tanks. Can we note that this will be able to be discussed in future years?

ANSWER: There is no removal or replacement of oil tanks scheduled until FY 20. During FY 19, we will discuss and review the direction the BOE would like to go with the tanks on the schedule for removal. [RICH]

TOPIC: CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

15. Page 242 please explain the total increase in the visual arts CIL - listed as .1 FTE under certified staff changes and as an additional increase under certified stipends.

ANSWER: The recommended increase for the visual arts CIL is 0.1 FTE. There is a corresponding increase in the stipend according to the formula in the WTA contract. [KEN]

16. Page 243 reading assessment grades 1- 3 - please refresh my memory - this is a one-time purchase of the new assessment, correct?

ANSWER: This is a one-time purchase, but it is for grades 3-5 for the 2018-19 school year. We will correct the grade levels on pg. 243. Grades K-2 will be addressed in FY20. [KEN]

17. CIL/Theater Coordinator-I am confused with the description, and see .1, .2, and .3FTE being used in different places.

ANSWER: We are recommending the Art CIL be increased by 0.1 FTE (from 0.2 to 0.3 FTE) and eliminating the release time for the Theater Coordinator, which is represented through a 0.2 FTE. [KEN/RICH]

18. Page 228 - Why is Project Challenge in 3rd grade anticipated at “0” for next year?

ANSWER: The number of students entering Project Challenge in grade three will not be determined until students are screened through the identification process. That process takes place during the second half of the school year, which is why those numbers cannot be included in the budget book. [KEN]

19. Page 244 - Consulting Services - Why isn't the \$20k for Literacy Training listed on pg 243 under Consulting Services? Is this a one-time cost for the new curriculum being put in place (from outside the district)?

ANSWER: Pg 243 shows the change in the budget whereas pg 244 shows the total budget. There is no change in literacy consulting so it is not listed on pg 243. The \$20,000 in consulting services is for 10 days of consulting support at the K-5 level (5 days for HES and 5 days for WIS) to support the implementation of the new reading curriculum. [KEN/RICH]

20. Page 245 - Books - There are two different lines for textbook renewal; how are they different? (electronic textbook renewal at \$16,156 and textbook renewal at \$17,009 - is one for actual hard copy book renewal?)

ANSWER: We are requesting a total of \$54,487 for textbook renewal. The \$17,009 is for year two of three of the replacement of science textbooks in grades 6-8. The electronic textbook line is for the renewal of the Math in Focus textbooks subscription for K-2. Both lines will be updated on page 245 with this additional detail. [KEN/RICH]

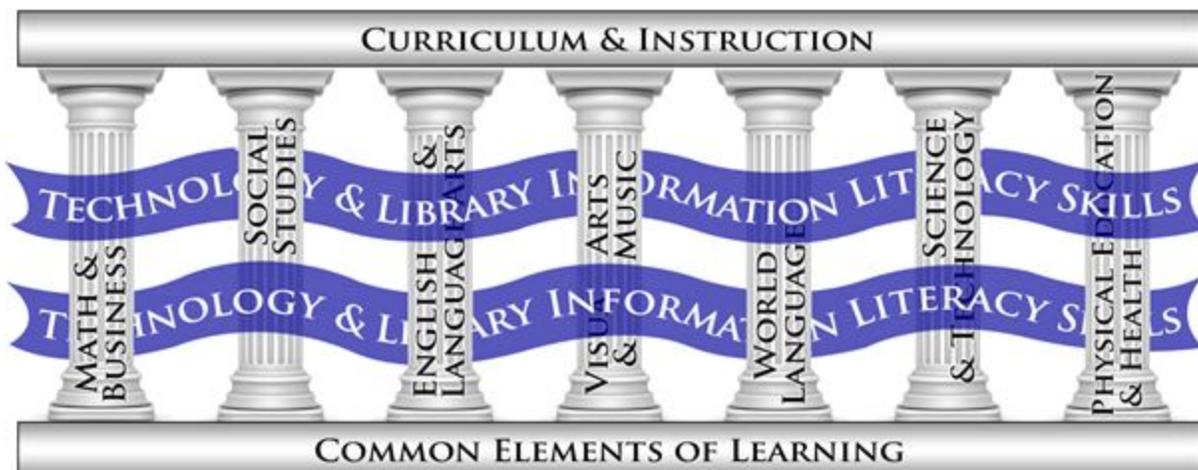
21. General question regarding fractional reductions in FTE for specials teachers. Can you please go into more detail about how these reductions are being handled? Are teachers making up FTEs in another building? Are they working less and taking a corresponding reduction in pay?

ANSWER: The small reductions in specials are the result of changes in enrollment primarily across the buildings. This may result in sharing staff between building or reducing teacher schedules. [KEN]

TOPIC: DIGITAL LEARNING & TECHNOLOGY

22. What specifically are we targeting in the 2019 budget vs the overall Digital and Learning Technology multi year plan?

ANSWER: In the technology update presentation completed for the Board of Education in 2016, a foundation was laid that encouraged the strengthening of the partnership between curriculum and instruction, ensuring that technology purchases were aligned to support the strong instruction provided by Weston’s professional staff. This was represented by the initial development of the Common Elements of Learning to ensure that Technology & Library Information Literacy Skills (depicted below) were woven throughout the curriculum, not stand alone items, and partnerships were created to ensure that these items were planned to support our students and staff. [CRAIG]



With that strong partnership, it then allowed for the district to progress down a continuum of technology and information literacy integration. This includes a number of areas such

as the developing of the Learning Commons, the MakerSpaces, implementation of the One-to-One program at the WIS and WMS and now the continuation of the Hurlbutt Elementary School Digital Innovation effort that will allow for an adequate number of devices to ensure that second grade students have full access to all learning opportunities. The highlighting of these opportunities does not represent that these are the only updates that have occurred. Through partnerships with the PTO's and the Weston Education Foundation, many other advances have occurred including additional opportunities in our MakerSpaces, the expansion of the Project Lead the Way engineering program at the Middle School and High School, the implementation of a Chromebook lab at Hurlbutt Elementary School and development of the video morning show program at the Weston Intermediate School. All of these things and more are made possible by the support of the Board of Education, the parents, and the Weston Public Schools staff, particularly our Library, Education Technology and Information Technology teams.

These items show the district's consistent progress down a continuum of technology integration now best represented by the integration of digital literacy and information literacy throughout the curriculum.

Presented during a Board of Education workshop in Spring of 2015 was an overview of our planning process:



We followed this process in creating a dynamic plan to support all aspects of the school district. In a presentation to the Board of Education in Spring of 2016, a purchase plan was outlined that included yearly purchases for infrastructure including wireless access

points and interactive classroom devices and purchases to support curriculum and instruction including Chromebooks, iPads and laptops. These are planned to be purchased in phases over a number of years in an effort to prevent budgetary spikes. We are on target with the plan.

In our Fall 2017 BOE Workshop on Digital Learning, a major conclusion was that we would move away from the moniker and concept of “One-to-One,” since it has become associated too often with the image of students working in complete isolation, supported only by their digital device. Instead, we will be using the terms ‘Direct Access to Digital Devices,’ or, “Devices on Demand,” which speak to our longstanding priority and approach with digital learning and devices--that is, they are solely intended to bolster and support learning, to be blended into the teaching and learning process, to be a means to access information and knowledge, to be a tool for collaborative work and communication among and between students and teachers, and to be, on a judicious basis, a way to personalize individualized learning. We in Weston believe in quality time with devices, not the quantity of time.

Our focus for the 2018-2019 school year is:

- Direct Access to Digital Devices - Providing the second grade at HES with the adequate number of devices to ensure that second grade students have full access to all learning opportunities.
- Strengthening the Infrastructure - The updates to our servers and wireless network.
- Continued Refresh Cycle for Technology - Which includes the replacement of classroom interactive technology as well as laptop computers for our professional staff.
- Shared Services and Projects with the Town of Weston - This represents the partnership forming between the Board of Education and the Town of Weston to support town-wide technology. [CRAIG]

23. Page 254 -- Is there a 1.0 FTE Technician addition?

ANSWER: Yes, as discussed in the Technology Workshops the past two years, the intention has been that there would be one technician per school and a dedicated IT person to the Town of Weston. The technical expertise is necessary as we expand direct access to digital devices throughout the district and continue shared services with the Town of Weston. As the MOU with the TOW for Information Technology shared services is finalized, this position is being added with the intention to provide support to

the Town of Weston. The increase in technology revenue is directly tied to the addition of this position. If this position does not go forward, the revenue would not either. [CRAIG]

24. Page 254 Chromebook repairs \$8,000 - is this in line with expectation? Are families responsible for any repairs? We charge for lost books, why not damages to digital devices?

ANSWER: While we have purchased an extended warranty on the Chromebooks at Weston Middle School, we have a substantial inventory of other Chromebooks which we need to be able to keep in service. We are maintaining 956 Chromebook devices located in other parts of the school district. This year we began performing many repairs in-house as a cost and time saving measure. This dollar amount represents our need to purchase parts and, periodically, send units out for repair. If a Chromebook is damaged during its use, the school administration reviews the incident and completes an appropriate investigation. If their investigation determines that the student acted in an inappropriate or negligent way, the I.T. department is notified and an invoice for repair is sent to the family. At this time, the majority of issues we are seeing are caused by normal wear and tear of the device usage in the intermediate and middle school. [CRAIG]

25. Page 258 Lenovo teacher and staff laptops 73 @ \$1,600 per. Please explain why we need a \$1,600 computer for teacher and staff.

ANSWER: We have continued to purchase, and upgrade to, the Lenovo Yoga series due to its reliability and durability. These devices consist of modern technology that will allow for longevity, including a minimum of I5 multi-core processors, 8 GB of memory, 256 GB SSD, touchscreen displays, portability due to its lightweightness of 2.9 lbs, and multiple port options for external display connectivity, including HDMI and mini DisplayPort. As laptop technology becomes more compact every year, the Yoga series continues to be easy to repair, especially as we are pursuing the ability to partner with Lenovo and become an in-house repair center. We find that this laptop works well within our 5-year plus refresh cycle. The \$1,600 price also includes a 3-year warranty to cover all repairs, except for screen damage. The specifications for these devices are also inline with the needs of the programs and technology that the teachers use to facilitate interactive classrooms and provide for a learning environment that is not strapped to the front of the classroom. The expected longevity of the Yoga series works well with the districts laptop refresh cycle due to the 73 being replaced this year representing 20% of the total need and extending the the overall refresh cycle to the year 2022. [CRAIG]

26. Page 32 - #6140 - Software - What is the need for \$96,735 of new software? (can any be postponed)

ANSWER: Much of this software is not new. The line item covers increases in the cost of existing software. Postponement of the expenditure also is not possible because much of this software is either embedded in our curriculum or is needed to operationally run the district. Some of the increases include:

- Go Guardian for MS Chromebooks \$18,992 (previously funded in equipment when the chromebooks were purchased)
- PowerSchool: \$16,926
- MUNIS: \$10,293 (will be hosted in the cloud)
- Canvas: \$12,063
- Kimono: \$5,280
- Talent Ed: \$5,240
- PaperCut: \$3,138
- Final Site: \$2,652
- Gale Opposing Views: \$2,576
- Destiny: \$2,230
- SNAP: \$1,520

Some of the new items include:

- § LanSchool 8: \$1,916 to allow teachers to monitor student use of non-Chromebook devices during class
- § Lexia: \$5,950 for Regular Ed use

The above items add up to \$88,776. This does not include the incremental price increases from many other vendors, which averages approximately 5%.

Having said all of this, we are regularly looking for cost savings with software. There are some licenses which have already been identified to not be renewed. We also are continuing the effort of critically evaluating the software we subscribe to in order to identify any additional savings potential. [CRAIG]

27. Page 254 - Could we defer the increase of the technician for a year?

ANSWER: No. This technician is due to the MOU with the Town for Shared Services. If we remove the technician, we must also remove the revenue increase shown on pg 253. [CRAIG]

28. Page 258 - Infrastructure - Will these items help support the increase in the number of devices being used in the district?

ANSWER: Overall, all infrastructure upgrades will help support the increased number of devices, especially the upgrade of the wireless network throughout the entire district, due to the extent to which staff and students rely on mobile devices. [CRAIG]

29. Page 258 - If we do not add in all of the iPad to HES, do we need the wireless access points at HES (30 at \$667 each)?

ANSWER: Even without the iPad rollout, new and upgraded wireless access points at HES are required and will improve overall performance due to how much staff and students rely on mobile devices. Most classrooms currently consist of, and will retain, two or three iPads. Additionally, the LLC has two Chromebook carts which are used throughout the building. With the implementation of the iPads in the second grade the current devices assigned to those rooms will be deployed to other classrooms increasing the overall number of devices in the building. [CRAIG]

30. Page 258 - What is the WIS Windows lab? Why do we need one given that the students are all 1:1 at this point?

ANSWER: The WIS Windows Lab allows for the Microsoft Windows environment to be available in the school, there is always a need to have diverse devices within each school. These devices run different programs and allow for a different instructional environment which the teachers take advantage of. While Chromebooks are an excellent educational solution for daily usage, there is always a need for devices that are more mainstream as Microsoft Windows is. This allows for the running of programs that are only available on Windows and to a minor extent also a controlled environment for administering some online testing. [CRAIG]

[Combined Response to Questions re: Library Media and Technology Staffing Changes](#)

The following three questions (#31-33) all center around the change in support being provided to the students and staff throughout the district in the areas of Library Media

Services and Technology Integration. Each question is answered directly, followed by a combined response, which gives a clearer picture of the change.

31. Please explain the shift from library learning commons specialist (LLCS) to library media specialist (LMS). Am I correct in the analysis below that this change represents \$81,801 in additional expense to the total budget?

	Inc .5 LMS	Dec .25 LLCS	Net Variance
HES	37,497	(24,401)	13,096
WIS	49,843	(12,055)	37,788
WMS	24,239	(25,442)	(1,203)
WHS	57,562	(25,442)	<u>32,120</u>
Total Budget Impact			81,801

ANSWER: These numbers are correct. It represents the return of each Library Media Specialist to a 1.0 FTE at each school and a 0.25 Library Learning Commons Technology Specialist spread across all four schools. The increase is due to a change from 4.0 FTE model to a 5.0 FTE model as explained in previous questions. [CRAIG]

32. Page 161 Please clarify the following "increase of .50 FTE for media specialist at HES for \$37,497. Also, Pg 170, the increase in .5 FTE Library Media @ \$49,843. Also, Pg 201- line 4 where the number is \$25,442. I am missing the reasoning. Can you explain why this change is occurring?

ANSWER: I believe the above summary draws upon all the questions in this area and represents a clear answer to the changes in the budget and their necessity. [CRAIG]

33. Page 152 - General/ LRC Media restructuring - can we manage to stay flat with the number of personnel this next year and add in the extra FTE in the following year once we have adjusted for the SpEd numbers? (Each incremental .25 per school is \$13K correct? so roughly \$50K total?)

ANSWER: The financial impact of this change is \$81,801. It is not possible to postpone this move due to the various concerns including the State certification requirements. [CRAIG]

Taken together, these three questions call out for a summary statement of our approach with [Library Media and Technology Staffing](#). The following summary demonstrates a more complete picture of the necessity for this change to occur.

As we planned for the further integration of technology in preparation for the 2017-2018 budget year, we moved in the direction of providing support to the staff in the areas of library services and technology using fewer staff and sharing the remaining staff across the district. We believed that this plan would provide the necessary support as we implemented the Chromebook program at the middle school. Two things occurred that have caused us to reconsider this direction.

First, it became clear as we worked with the professional staff during the first part of this school year that this plan was not supplying the necessary support for the entire district. We believe this year’s recommendation, while similar to our previous staffing in 2016-2017 and before, is a stable solution that will last the district for many years. The following chart demonstrates the certified staffing support in this area over the past years.

Position	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
Technology Integrator	2 (shared across all schools)	1.5 (shared across all schools)	0	1 (shared across all schools)
Library Media Specialist/Learning Commons Library Specialist (certified)	4	4	2 (As Learning Commons Library Specialist)	4 (As Library Media Specialist)
Learning Commons Technology Specialist	0	0	2	0
Total	6	5.5	4	5

In order for the current model of shared responsibilities between the positions of the Library Media Specialists and Learning Commons Library Specialists to be successful, the teachers in both positions would need to hold the library media specialist certification. The absence of this certification limits the number of duties the current Learning Commons Technology Specialists can perform in the learning commons environments. The requirement that the positions hold the library media specialist certification

represents a shift in the State’s position regarding this requirement. Based on discussions with the State Department of Education certification office, we believe a return to a four library media specialist model will best serve the needs of the district.

In the 2017-2018 budget year, we tried to best reflect the sharing of these positions by placing each position as a 0.5 in each school. While, for the sake of the individual schools and their students and staff, the actual staff members spent the vast majority of their time in their primary school assignment. The proposed budget reflects the hiring of a certified library media specialist, the retaining of our current certified Library Media Specialists, and one staff member’s return to training to obtain their Library Media Certification. Additionally, one of our staff members whose current title is Learning Commons Technology Specialist has his expertise in technology integration. Before the 2017-2018 school year, that teacher worked as a Technology Integrator for the Weston Public Schools. This individual will remain a Learning Commons Technology Specialist with a focus on technology integration throughout the school district, in all schools. The title will remain to represent the ongoing partnership between library media services and technology service as well as the district’s forward thinking approach that the use of technology is more than integration, it is a complete partnership with instruction, including digital citizenship, information literacy, and technology skills.

Therefore, this year’s budget and long-term proposal reflects the following FTE in each school.

	HES	WIS	WHS	WHS	Total
Library Media Specialist	1	1	1	1	4
Learning Commons Technology Specialist	.25	.25	.25	.25	1
Total					5

This is an increase of 1.0 FTE for this team but an overall reduction in FTE since the inception of this Digital Learning direction in 2015. The numbers represented in the next question accurately represent the financial impact of this change as it is associated to the zero increase portion of the overall district’s budget. [CRAIG]

[WMS Chromebook and WMS/WHS Transition Initiatives](#)

34. Page 258 6th grade Chromebook and Chromebook covers for 8th to 9th grade - for discussion as to why are providing Chromebooks for 9th grade instead of going full byod for WHS? If we do decide to transition Chromebooks to 9th grade why do they need new covers?

ANSWER: As we implement a sustainable and long-term program at the Weston Middle School, the covers that are being provided to the students are integrated into the school culture and community. The covers include the school's PBIS slogan, SOAR, and the name Weston Middle School. Students are also allowed to personalize the covers with the use of stickers or other appropriate methods. Partnering with this program helps to encourage the students to act appropriately with their devices, and keep the SOAR message accessible throughout the school. We expect that students who choose to retain these devices as they transition to the high school would not want to retain the Weston Middle School cover. Additionally, if the Chromebooks are returned and reissued to a student, that student would need to be provided with the same ability to personalize his/her Chromebook cover. The new Chromebooks being purchased for the sixth grade would need covers as they do now.

You may recall that the difference between the one-to-one initiative, BYOD initiative or a hybrid model was first discussed during the technology presentations in 2016. After meeting with the high school administration and staff, it was determined that neither a BYOD or a one-to-one initiative would be beneficial to the high school instructional environment. The unique department needs would always require that select departments be provided devices that conform to these specific needs. Programs such as visual arts, science, engineering, advanced placement computer science all require specific computer specifications to allow for the seamless integration into the curriculum. At the same time, research and experiences of other districts show that a BYOD program can detract from the classroom environment and reduce instructional time because teachers are forced to troubleshoot and support various devices to ensure all students can participate in various aspects of instruction. The best combination of these programs that we are recommending is a hybrid program - allowing students to retain their Chromebooks as they transition to the high school. We have no history with this initiative, but we believe that the majority of students will look to keep their Chromebooks. Similarly, we believe the students will look to continue to use the Chromebooks until their Junior or Senior year, assuming that at that time families purchase a device that can be used in high school and in college. If the students do not want to keep the device in high school, it will be returned to inventory and re-issued to an incoming 6th grader, reducing the number purchased for the 6th grade. As additional reference, some of our neighboring communities are also

experiencing parent concerns around a purely BYOD model. This hybrid model should alleviate those types of concerns. [CRAIG]

Related Link:

<https://ncadvertiser.com/111047/parents-voice-concerns-for-schools-technology-policy/>

35. Page 258 - I am confused about the Chromebook purchase requests. We discussed the need for WHS to be a BYOD school to prepare the students for college as developmental step. We also discussed the district policy having availability of devices to lend in the LRC at WHS. I do not think the district should move the 1:1 to 9th grade. Many HS students do not like to use Chromebooks and will use their own devices anyway (they move to mac or surface devices). If we are not moving them into 9th grade, we do not need to purchase for 6th grade. If the concern is that the devices have 4 year life cycle, we could pair the device to the student in 5th grade rather than 6th (having it live at WIS for the first year). (\$66K)

ANSWER: We have actually received very different input from WHS teachers and students. Currently the Chromebooks are in heavy use at the high school and all of the Chromebooks available are always in use. It has actually been specifically stated that the Chromebook is the preferred tool and device. This decision is not based on the life expectancy of the device and we actually are anticipating a longer life expectancy. Currently Google has changed its policies to continue to support devices to 6.5 years. I also would believe that we will continue to see a positive shift in this policy as the technology continues to improve, the accessibility and affordability of replacement parts, as well as future industry ramifications after the recent legal decision against Apple computer for deliberately taking steps to slow down older iPhones. While each manufacturer and device is handled slightly differently, there are always a number of open source options which will allow us to keep devices in production use. As mentioned in the previous question response, our focus in the decision was to maximize instruction time, ensure that all students have access when needed as part of the curriculum and provide support to our front line educators by specifically ensuring that their request for specific technology to meet the needs of specific departments can be met.

Your statement regarding devices that are not used at the high school is correct. As stated in the previous response, devices that are not used to transition to the high school will be returned to inventory and reissued to a new student. These device will still require new covers. [CRAIG]

Relevant Links:

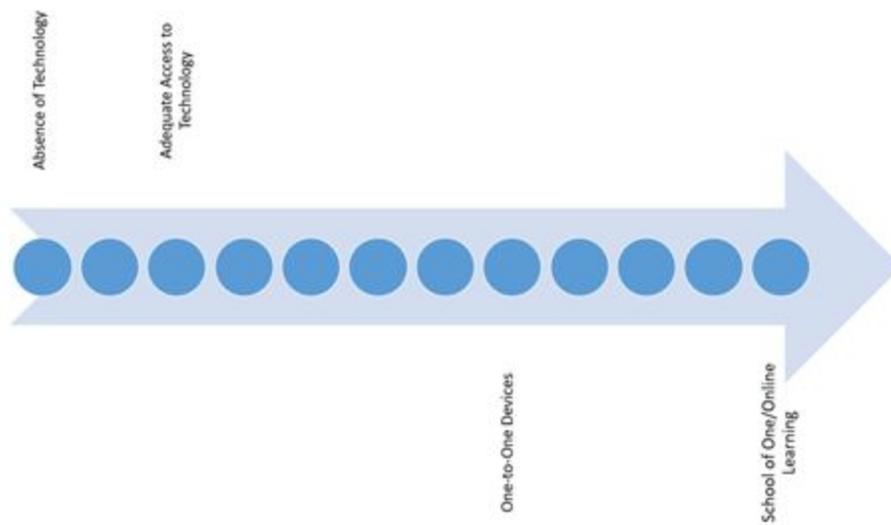
<https://chromeunboxed.com/googles-end-of-life-policy-for-chromebooks-gets-updated/>
<https://chromeunboxed.com/why-googles-end-of-life-policy-for-chromebooks-isnt-a-big-deal/>

[Hurlbutt Elementary School Digital Innovation Effort](#)

36. Page 258 - 160 iPads is more than the projected incoming second graders isn't it? Also, couldn't we maybe purchase half that number and have the classrooms pair up and share one full set to two classrooms? We have been told that the children at HES need to write with their hands and that they should not be on devices as much as the bigger students for development/curricular reasons, so it seems that sharing would be optimal (especially while they are working on writing and fine motor skills). Could they also have half the number of carts?

ANSWER: The anticipated number of second graders is 150. We need to have additional devices to provide for the teachers to use; we also need spares to provide an immediate accommodation when any devices are out of service. Attempting to share a set between classes will impose serious constraints on instruction. An on-demand approach to device implementation is educationally sound and supports a blended learning environment. Throughout this planning process, the intent has always been to support instruction currently happening in the classroom--never to replace teacher instruction with devices. There is no intent to fully transition to a digital platform. The number of devices requested allows for a class to fully work with them when it is instructionally appropriate, but also work in many other fashions, including small group collaboration and independently. We fully expect that there will be a lot of times that students will not use devices. The use of the devices is not about quantity, it's about quality. With quality instruction time being our paramount focus, we are actively looking to reduce any scheduling issues the teachers would have in planning high quality lessons. A teacher should not have to plan lessons to fit the time of day that devices are available; nor should students have to experience disjointed instruction because devices are not available when they are required during instruction. Such scenarios would be counter to the approach our teachers are taking to integrate technology as a natural and effective tool.

As depicted in the visual below, if you consider a continuum of technology use in the classroom, the programs at the various levels are considerably different, and the access to the devices allows for the integration of technology at the appropriate level. [CRAIG]



37. As we begin the HES program providing appropriate access to digital devices and the integration of technology can you explain how grades K and 1 will be handled in the future.

ANSWER: We are still in the planning cycle for grades K and 1. Each grade level is different both developmentally and instructionally; their needs for access to technology will vary. The ability to access technology is not a direct relationship to the use of technology. As referenced in the previous question, access to technology is provided in partnership with curricular needs. The next steps in discussion of the use of technology in grades K and 1 will be to work collaboratively with the school to determine the use of the devices and where they meet the needs of the students and staff. Currently grades K and 1 have extremely old iPads that are not able to be upgraded to the current operating system nor are they able to run the current programs the teachers would like to use with the students. Since presenting the plans for the 2nd grade direct access to digital devices program to HES faculty this fall, we have had teachers in other grades indicate the need for quality technology to be brought to their level as soon as possible. Our future plans support these requests. [CRAIG]

[Links of interest in relation to HES Digital Innovation Effort](#)

There is much research in this area. Research can often conflict with each other. One consistent message is that quality use of technology is valuable. As stated earlier, our goal is to ensure that technology is used to support instruction at appropriate points in the curriculum and in appropriate ways with no intention to replace current teaching and

instruction. It should also be kept in mind that because of the strong partnership between technology and curriculum all of these implementations advance our standards and curriculum, and are occurring in a coordinated fashion across our schools. There still remains a focus on the whole child which is also a consistent message throughout this research area. [CRAIG]

Links:

<https://www.edutopia.org/article/reframing-debate-screen-time-beth-holland>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jordanshapiro/2013/07/17/research-says-screen-time-can-be-good-for-your-kids/#601970be5823>

<https://goodmenproject.com/families/how-much-screen-time-is-too-much-for-kids-bbab/>

TOPIC: ENROLLMENT

38. Page 1- Introduction My concern is the same one I have had every year we have a budget. I think we do serious damage and create confusion when we underreport our enrollment. The public focuses always, on the lowest number, which can skew their understanding of the true picture and cause a mixed message. I strongly feel we should always include out Pre K, and our OOD numbers, we are incurring the costs and they should be represented. I do not understand the reason for bifurcating the numbers.

ANSWER: In the interest of accuracy, the determination was made a few years ago to separate these figures. The numbers are bifurcated because the pre-school numbers change significantly over the course of the year, and attempts to project those numbers have proven unreliable. In general, when attempting to project pre-k, the number of students has been far more than are actually enrolled.

Out of district placements are likewise extremely difficult to predict. This has been borne out over the last few budget years, and it has been reflected in the special education budget overruns. [LEWIS]

39. Page 260 - Given the reliance on real estate and not cohorts at all by Milone, should the district re-evaluate the decision to leave NESDEC?

ANSWER: This is the first year that Weston has asked for a full enrollment analysis from Milone & MacBroom. It will be interesting to see which projection (M&M or NESDEC) proves more accurate when the official enrollment numbers are determined next October 1. At that point, we will evaluate our recommendation regarding how best to proceed. In

general, however, Milone & MacBroom can provide more robust, multifaceted and Connecticut-specific analysis and perspective. Their staff also are more accessible for consultation. [LEWIS]

40. With regards to elementary enrollment, what is the likelihood that one of the three grades that experienced a reduction will actually go over the Board's class size guidelines? If additional sections are needed, what will be the impact of FTE for specials teachers?

ANSWER: At HES, Kindergarten is six students from reaching the maximum BOE classroom guidelines of 20 students per class, 1st grade is 15 students from reaching the maximum BOE classroom guidelines of 20 per class, and 2nd grade is 13 students from reaching the maximum classroom guidelines of 24.

At WIS, 3rd grade is 11 students from reaching the maximum BOE classroom guidelines of 24 students per class, 4th grade is 10 students away, and 5th grade is 13 students from reaching the BOE classroom guidelines of 24 students per class.

In previous years, including FY 17 and FY 16, we have had to add additional teachers due to fluctuation in enrollment. However, those additional teachers were able to be funded through the reallocation of existing district resources. We would expect to handle the situation similarly in FY 19, but the BOF has also indicated in the past we could approach them about additional funding due to enrollment driven personnel changes. [RICH/KEN]

TOPIC: FACILITIES

41. Page 269 Rental of facilities-What is line 4401, portable refer to?

ANSWER: This account represents the cost of the storage containers that hold our facility and maintenance equipment. There are four storage containers that hold electrical and carpentry equipment due to lack of space in the maintenance shop. It is critical these items are stored. Other items stored in these containers include musical props that needed to be moved to address a fire violation at the WIS, soccer and tennis equipment for athletes.

In addition the graduation tent previously was paid out of this account, but is being recommended to be eliminated. [RICH]

42. Page 274 "reduction to exterior lighting at a savings of \$2800". Why and/or did we reduce or just do more with less?

ANSWER: This account has not been used since FY 2013. We handle any changes to exterior lighting with one of our general maintenance mechanics and the only cost would be materials, which would be expensed under maintenance materials. [RICH]

43. Page 274 - Why is oil consumption up at HES and WIS?

ANSWER: During fiscal year 2018, we had our boilers cleaned and adjusted for natural gas. During this burner adjustment, all of our set points were adjusted to recommended specifications by our insurance company, which resulted in a small increase in consumption at Hurlbutt and WIS to maintain a proper temperature. [RICH]

44. Page 302 #s 12 & 13 - When expanding the Generator Capacity will we be adding new generators to the mix or just moving items around on the existing ones? (Would we be able to move to natural gas?)

ANSWER: We would be expanding the load on our existing generators not replacing them or adding new ones. One high school generator is natural gas and the other high school generator is diesel. The generator at WIS is diesel. To run on natural gas for either of the diesel generator, would be very costly if at all possible. [RICH]

45. On page 274, a price for heating oil is listed as decreasing from \$6.62 to \$5.82. Is this per gallon? There's something I'm not understanding because home heating oil is less than \$3.00 per gallon right now.

ANSWER: This is for natural gas and is MMBTU. [RICH]

TOPIC: GENERAL QUESTIONS

46. In the 2019 budget there are two significant expense items that makes the year to year budget comparisons more challenging:

(1) Financial impact of migrating employees to the State Partnership Plan (resulting in an overall \$453,033 reduction in the overall benefits line vs 2018 budget).

(2) Estimated Cost of SPED Out of District Placements and Unilateral Agreements of \$2,651,400 for FY 2019 vs a \$1,476,000 2018 FY budget and \$2,878,572 projected expense for FY 2018.

As a result, I would recommend that we look at the budget in comparison to 2018 budget as well as 2018 projected for a more transparent presentation and to also normalize for the SPED shortfall in 2018. This would demonstrate that while the increase over the 2018 budget is 3.60%, the actual increase from 2018 projected would be 1.83%.

Objctcs	2018 Budget (original)	2018 Budget (Revised as of Nov)	2018 Projected	2019 Budget	% 2019 Budget vs 2018 Original Budget	% 2019 Budget vs 2018 Revised Budget	% 2019 Budget vs 2018 Projected
Salary and Wages	31,541,497	31,419,654	31,409,717	32,423,703	2.80%	3.20%	3.23%
Benefits	9,338,107	9,329,274	9,329,274	8,876,241	-4.95%	-4.86%	-4.86%
Professional and Technical Services	1,244,622	1,095,652	1,101,712	1,271,888	2.19%	16.09%	15.45%
Property Services	1,997,899	1,972,165	1,945,968	1,927,257	-3.54%	-2.28%	-0.96%
Other Services	3,745,397	4,090,065	5,154,342	4,957,239	32.36%	21.20%	-3.82%
Supplies and Materials	2,598,953	2,551,022	2,551,022	2,769,080	6.55%	8.55%	8.55%
Equipment	242,874	270,376	270,375	531,447	118.82%	96.56%	96.56%
Other Objects	122,083	95,809	95,809	116,534	-4.55%	21.63%	21.63%
Revenues	(923,910)	(916,495)	(1,083,818)	(1,167,779)	26.40%	27.42%	7.75%
Total	49,907,522	49,907,522	50,774,401	51,705,610	3.60%	3.60%	1.83%

ANSWER: In FY 19, we will address the budget gap that the FY 18 special education shortfall plays in causing the 3.6% budget recommendation. However, we would not recommend comparing the budget recommendation to a projection primarily because these are rolling (dynamic) projections. For instance:

- 1) The December projection has already been adjusted compared to the November projection;
- 2) The November projection compared to budget has been skewed by factors including, the “soft” freeze and holding positions vacant in order to address issues such as the Special Education shortfall, the inability to achieve staff turnover credit, additional chromebooks at the middle school, chromebooks for the BOE, and a water heater failure at WIS. [RICH]

47. Overall: Broadly speaking, how would the administration allocate a budget based on the assumption that all expense items other than 2019 budget Salary, Wages and Benefits would be held to the 2018 projected levels (i.e. 2019 budget Salary, Wages and Benefits plus 2018 projected all else = \$51,335,354). This will result in an annual budget increase of 2.86% and a 1.1% increase vs 2018 projected. In this scenario, what would need to be reduced further to facilitate critical investments?

ANSWER: When reviewing the FY 19 budget, we should not compare it to the current November projected financials. However, answering this question would mean making reductions in non-salary/benefit accounts totaling \$370,256. In our non-salaried accounts,

we have fixed costs associated with Transportation, Heating, Electricity, Cleaning Contract, Zenon Plant, Out of District Tuition/Unilateral Agreements, Rubbish Removal, Parks and Recreation, Energy Management Services, Security Monitoring, General Liability Insurance, Property Insurance, Athletic Insurance, Management Services, License Fees, Energy Management System, Telephone Bills, Copier Lease Agreement, Propane and Diesel Fuel. These accounts represent 70% of the available accounts to make reductions of \$370,256. Given that we would not be able to run a school system without books and materials that are essential to the classroom or basic custodial and maintenance materials, this would bring this amount to 77%. In addition, there are a number of items that are reflected as expenses in areas such as other professional technical services that cannot be reduced without reducing revenue. We also have areas such as Legal Fees, OT/PT Services, and Contracted Services for Special Education, which are vital to operate the district and provide services needed for our students. Finally, we have Mile of Safety and mandated fire duty for concerts, graduation and other events, which is funded in these accounts. When factoring in these areas, the fixed amount grows to 85%. Another consideration is the expenses related to maintaining our buildings and grounds. While these are not fixed costs, if we scale back maintenance of our facilities, long-term financial investments will be needed as our building and campus begin to deteriorate. This brings that amount to 89%. Reductions in these areas would be contrary to sound long-term fiscal planning. This leaves approximately \$1.1 million available to consider as potential reductions, which would require a 33% reduction to meet the \$370,256 reduction. This leaves the following areas as potential considerations:

1. Testing
2. Consulting Services
3. Travel and Conference
4. Software
5. Technology Investments

As shown in the budget detail we have already made large reductions in consulting services (15%), large reductions in Travel and Conference (7%). These reductions are as significant as we feel we can make without harming the system as a whole. That leaves primarily Technology as the only viable area to make reductions. In order to ensure Weston remains an elite district, investing in Technology is paramount to ensuring we continue to evolve and provide the greatest level of education our students deserve. The investment in technology equipment represents less than 1% of the budget. [RICH]

48. DRG Comparison pages 137 & 139 - thoughts on a schedule comparing the per pupil expenditure growth?

ANSWER: Below is a schedule of the 3 year growth in per pupil expenditures in DRG A. [RICH]

District	3 Year Growth Rate (14/15 to 16/17)
Westport	3.24%
Weston	4.21%
New Canaan	5.28%
Redding	6.37%
Wilton	7.46%
Darien	8.68%
Ridgefield	8.90%
Region 9	14.72%
Average	7.48%

49. Page 6- clarify in the 6th paragraph, "financial resources in this fund can be reserved for future use"....should be clarified to what is the appropriate use, not just anything.

ANSWER: This is the same text that has been in the budget book for many years. However, we will send a replacement page. [RICH]

50. Page 16 Executive Summary- Everything else is \$129.....clearly some 0s need to be added?

ANSWER: No, this is correct at \$129. The breakdown is as follows: [RICH]

Cost Center	\$ Growth
Hurlbutt	\$(64,535)
Weston Intermediate School	\$75,117

Weston Middle School	\$106,513
Weston High School	\$179,561
Athletics	\$26,645
Curriculum	\$77,116
Digital Learning & Technology	\$183,717
District Administration	\$34,906
Facilities	\$(25,275)
Security	\$(82,682)
Transportation (less SPED Transportation)	\$97,142
Copy Center	\$4,699
District Wide (less OPEB and ISF Contribution)	\$(612,794)
Total	\$129

51. Page 265 I see the \$50,000 for Shipman and Goodwin. I would never want to let them go. However, could we have a 5 year average of costs?

ANSWER:

Here is a five year average of the Shipman and Goodwin expenses.

FY 18: \$57,500 (Represents current year projection, Currently \$7,500 over originally budget)

FY 17: \$44,700

FY 16: \$37,597

FY 15: \$50,811

FY 14: \$62,366

Average: \$50,595

[RICH]

52. Page 297 Why is there a 44.46% reduction in regular tuition?

ANSWER: As discussed in Finance Committee when we reviewed the non-resident tuition line item, we have two students who are in 12th grade who are set to graduate in June. Assuming they graduate, we would not receive tuition from them next year. Those two students represent the reduction. [RICH]

53. Page 32 - #6110 Materials - what materials are covered by the increase of \$80k?

ANSWER: As indicated in the key budget drivers under each cost center, we have transferred the expenses relating to the Theater Program from the student accounts to the operating budget along with the corresponding revenue collected. The theater materials account for \$43,750 of this increase, but is offset by the revenue collected shown under theater receipts. Other increases include \$48,164 for K-2 and Grade 5 Science Resources shown in Curriculum's budget, and \$4,400 for technology materials for ink cartridges for WHS photo class. [RICH/KEN]

54. Page 143 - DRG Comparisons: In 2015, we were #8 for Instructional Programs but #1 for PPS (in fact, we are always #1 for PPS) - why is PPS so high relative to other districts but not other areas? Same question for Plant (we are #1). We are #6 for School Based Admin so how is Plant or PPS different?

ANSWER: The DRG comparison that the State issues is based on each districts ED001 submission. The ED001 is not a standard uniform report for all districts in how they choose to allocate expenditures based on the States instructions. Additionally, certain factors play a role in what calculates the per pupil cost in each program area that can result in the fluctuation of ranking. These factors are not an apples to apples comparison. Within Pupil Services (which also includes program improvement, which is not necessarily related to PPS within our budget) these are some of the factors that primarily cause Weston to rank first:

1. Benefits: Weston health insurance allocation for those staff members within Pupil Services is approximately 31% of the salaries for those staff members, which result in a \$432 per pupil expenditure within this category of the \$3,671. This compares to Darien, who has a 23% ratio and \$105 per student, or Ridgefield, which has a 30% allocation or a \$325 per pupil cost.

2. Purchased Services: Technology Lease. Because much of our technology is curriculum related those portions are coded in the ED001 to improvement in instructional services, which for the ED001 falls under PPS. This amount accounts for 402 of this \$3,671 amount. However, some districts choose to allocate this under instructional

programs and not improvement in instructional programs. For example, Ridgefield includes this under improvement in instructional services, and Darien and Wilton under instructional programs. This results in Ridgefield having a \$303 per student cost but Darien only a \$92 cost. This would be another example of the non-standardized nature of these figures under the ED001 report, which is why we always recommend not using this as a baseline for comparisons each year.

In terms of our physical plant, measuring what we spend per pupil would not be an appropriate indicator of one’s facility expenditures. Given sq. footage drives the cost of maintaining our facilities and grounds, the most appropriate comparison would be facility expenditures per sq. foot in the DRG. Under this method, Weston actually spends the least per sq. foot within their operating budget.

District	Facilities Budget Cost Per Sq. Foot
Weston	\$7.69
New Canaan	\$7.80
Westport	\$8.22
Darien	\$8.72
Ridgefield	6\$9.29
Wilton	\$8.05
Average	\$8.29

Within School Administration, Weston includes a portion of positions such as the Director of Digital Learning and the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, but the other portion is also included in Improvement to Instructional Services, which rolls into Pupil Services, which also drives Weston to rank first. In some districts these positions are included in Instructional Programs. Also included in this area is the Director of Pupil Services and Assistant Director of Pupil Services, which in some districts is coded to instructional programs. This would be another example of a non-apples to apples comparison.

In sum, these DRG comparisons based on each districts ED001 submission should not be the baseline comparison for how each district compares in key areas. The problem is how

the ED001 is compiled and required to be submitted. Comparisons on actual standardized expenditures and collected data are far more valuable comparative analysis.

[RICH/KEN/LOIS]

55. Professional and Technical Services are expected to increase 2.19% vs 2018 original budget but 16.09% vs revised 2018 budget and 15.45% vs 2018 projected. What are the drivers of this?

ANSWER: When reviewing the FY 19 budget we should not compare it to the current November projected financials. As discussed in an earlier question, there were a number of decisions made during the year in FY 18 that skew the projection when compared to FY 19: including, freezing positions and implementing a soft freeze among all the cost centers. However, we list below differences in the FY 18 vs. FY 19 professional and technical services by object.

Category	Projection (Nov)	FY 19 Recommend Budget	Variance
Contracted Services	\$372,460	\$394,325	\$21,865
Consulting Services	\$162,192	\$145,000	\$(17,192)
Testing	\$75,302	\$96,600	\$21,298
Other Pupil Services	\$171,055	\$177,075	\$6,020
Management Services	\$20,619	\$78,855	\$58,236
License Fees	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$0
Legal Fees	\$97,260	\$105,000	\$7,740
Police/Fire	\$63,381	\$64,020	\$(361)
Professional Technical Services	\$87,504	\$158,864	\$71,360
Sports Officials	\$47,439	\$48,649	\$1,210
Total	\$1,101,712	\$1,271,888	\$170,176

The main drivers of this increase are contracted services, testing, management services, legal fees and professional and technical services. The increases in these areas compared to projection are due to:

1. In FY 18, we reduced contracted services in Special Education by \$53,205 for a student who was previously supported through contracted services but is now outplaced, which is referenced on pg. 223. But in FY 19, we have rate increases and support need increases for behavioral services, which is a major pressure point for outplacements and unilateral agreements. This increases the line item by \$19,360, also referenced on pg. 223. The other increase is \$600 for the adult education program contracted with the Norwalk Public Schools, which is in the curriculum cost center. This increase was also seen in FY 18. The remaining difference is due to a one time transfer in contracted services for savings from summer school.
2. The rise in testing costs is due to a \$12,000 increase within curriculum for reading assessments grades 1 through 3. There were also one time transfers of \$4,298 as part of the soft freeze within curriculum to help cover the special education deficit. Additionally, we took one time transfers of \$5,000 as part of the soft freeze to cover special education tuition from testing within special education.
3. Another main area for the increase is management services with an increase of \$58,236. This increase is entirely due to the shift to the State Partnership Plan 2.0. Expenses that were previously paid for through the Internal Services Fund in FY 19 will be paid directly from specific expense items within the operating budget as we now pay premiums to the State of CT rather than claims. These expenses include benefit advisory services, affordable care act compliance, affordable care act taxes, and employee assistance program. These expenses are all outlined on pg. 297.
4. Another main increase is within legal fees for special education. At the last several Finance Committee Meetings, we discussed the growing trend in Legal Fees for both the district and special education. This resulted in an increase of \$7,500.
5. Finally, the other main increase is within other professional technical services. Of the \$71,360 increase, \$29,795 relates to the shift of expenditures from student activity accounts to the operating budget for the Theater Program. There are as mentioned in the budget book offsetting revenue shown in the theater receipt line item of the specific cost center. The other increases in this category include increases in Technology to update our website to be ADA compliant, increases for internet access as the State has eliminated reimbursement for internet access, as well as E-Rate reimbursement for internet access,

and increases for Veeam Backup and VMWare management. We also in FY 18, as discussed in Finance Committee, took one time transfers to cover unexpected expenses related to the replacement projector at the HS. These one time transfers skew the FY 18 projection when comparing to FY 19 recommended budget. [RICH]

56. Page 149 - I notice that we are budgeting a number for ECS - the state has not sent any new guidance around this have they?

ANSWER: We do not budget for ECS as this is a revenue sent directly to the Town not the BOE. The amount shown on pg. 149 is based on what the State has indicated Weston will receive next year but not a budget. The budget for ECS revenue is on the town side. The BOE has no control over what is budgeted by the Town for ECS. [RICH]

TOPIC: PERSONNEL – CONTRACTS & SPP 2.0

57. Benefits: Can the BOE get a more details related to the description and mechanics of the State Partnership Plan 2.0? How will the ISF balance sheet be impacted beyond 2019?

ANSWER: We will discuss the State Partnership Plan 2.0 (SPP 2.0) more during the presentation. But the State Partnership Plan 2.0 is based on the health insurance plan offered to state employees SEBAC group. The State Legislature opened up enrollment to municipalities and BOE's in an effort to spread the financial risk over a greater pool. The plan's design is a PPO instead of a HDHP. SPP 2.0 operates as a self-insured plan, pooling all the premiums collected to pay for claims. Given that the plan is based on the rates for State employees, the rates charged to municipalities, especially those in Fairfield County, represent a significant reduction compared to insurance they can provide on their own. As more Fairfield County towns have joined, the plan's costs have seen greater increases than in the past.

Our balance sheet will be reduced once our IBNR is paid out during FY 19. Our IBNR has typically been between \$830,000 and \$850,000. With projected year end assets totaling approximately \$2.1 million, we anticipate this going down to \$1.3 million. However, our dental insurance will remain self-insured and paid through the ISF. [RICH]

58. Stop/Loss replacement has been figured over 4 years, but we only have a 3 year contract with WTA. Why don't these align for the same time frame?

ANSWER: The WTA contract is two years not three years. The commitment necessary for the State Partnership Plan 2.0 is three year commitment, meaning that a change would

occur in year four, hence the figure based on year four. However, as discussed during negotiations, and no matter the level of funding made to the ISF, a budgetary gap cannot be prevented, only delayed for a year. Anytime you use a non-recurring source of revenue to fund a recurring expense, the budgetary shortfall typically returns once that non-recurring revenue is extinguished. Pre-funding the ISF will only prevent that should our first year claims be well under budget in the first year post the SPP 2.0. [RICH]

59. Page 298 If we were to go back into a HDHP with the staff in 3 years, it already determined that we would absolutely have to offer some sort of HSA contribution? I do not recall talking about this in negotiations, and I would want to have that opportunity. Different times, different money- Why would we automatically have to assume that cost for each employee?

ANSWER: Nothing is absolutely determined. However, there is no district in CT who has an H.S.A. insurance plan that does not provide a deposit. In addition, it would be highly unlikely Weston would be successful in negotiating a contract or winning in arbitration a complete removal of an H.S.A deposit after a shift of insurance plans. It is assumed at the same contribution rate that is currently known. But again, the amount indicated as an ISF contribution will not prevent a budgetary gap the year a switch from the SPP 2.0 to an H.S.A. HDHP occurs. [RICH]

60. Page 294 - Could Rich walk us through the “safety net” we are setting up to guard against the potential long term insolvency concerns of the State Partnership Plan? How much are we aiming to hold in reserve eventually/forever? How long will it take us to get to that number?

ANSWER: The ISF contribution is included in this budget as a request from the Negotiations Committee and the BOF. No amount of funds budgeted here or in any subsequent year will prevent a budgetary gap from developing should the SPP 2.0 become insolvent and we must transition back to a HDHP. This deposit is aimed solely at mitigating that first year gap, but that gap will then occur in year two unless claims in the first year upon moving back to an HDHP plan are extremely favorable, creating excess surpluses within the ISF that can be used as a rolling budgetary offset until we reach a point of leveling our budget to a new HDHP plan. As stated earlier, any time you use a non-recurring source of revenue (ISF deposits) to fund recurring expenses (Stop Loss, H.S.A. deposits), once the non recurring revenue ends you have a budgetary gap. This is a direct result of the two plans diverging in costs over time. The expectation is that the State Partnership Plan 2.0 will become insolvent due to the fact that there is no actual cost reductions associated with how they run their health plan or any cost reductions

associated with the underlying cost of claims. In fact, the PPO plan they offer is a richer plan than the current H.S.A plan; however, because the rates are based on the SEBAC state employees' health plan, and the cost of Fairfield County health insurance is greater, it does create large savings upon shifting to the SPP 2.0. The ability to charge less comes from the larger pool of participants with the hopes that more will be collected than actual claims being paid out, even though the underlying cost of those claims vary by location within CT.

As more Fairfield County towns transfer to the SPP 2.0, it is expected that the claim base will continue to rise (which has been seen as the initial group of Fairfield County Towns shifted). As this occurs, either the rates the SPP 2.0 charges will have to dramatically increase, which will result in potential labor concerns for the State workers which could result in the State dissolving the SPP 2.0, or they will potentially assess a Fairfield County surcharge (which has been discussed), which would then make the SPP 2.0 less financially advantageous and potentially cause Fairfield County Towns to look elsewhere for health insurance. However, the savings associated with just a three year commitment (over \$5 million) far outweigh the cost associated with moving back to the a HDHP should that occur, which is what makes moving to the SPP 2.0 attractive. [RICH]

TOPIC: Schools HES

61. Page 161 - reduction of .04 FTE in HES world language instruction is not noted as "due to enrollment". Why are we reducing?

ANSWER: We apologize for the confusion. The reduction is due to enrollment, as with the other reductions in specialist times. [KEN/LAURA]

62. Page 157 (HES) - Would it be manageable to hire the reading teachers in a two year cycle rather than at the same time?

ANSWER: We are not hiring additional reading teachers. They are existing teachers within the budget. There is no additional FTE. [KEN/LAURA]

TOPIC: Schools WIS

63. Page 169 -170 - WIS Musical Accounting - We are showing approx. \$13k in revenue, a stipend of almost \$3k and then expenses of approx. \$5k for a net profit of approx. \$5k. Are students charged a fee to participate? If so, should they be? The families of the

participants drive the ticket sales so not sure about having them pay 2x to give our budget a \$5k boost.

ANSWER: We do not charge students to participate in Theater. The additional revenue is due to ticket sales, advertising revenue, concessions that are collected for performances. This revenue exceeds what is paid out to put on the performance. The net receipts are \$12,825 with expenses totaling \$11,460 with a net profit of \$1,365. [RICH/PATTIE]

64. Page 168 (WIS) - #3309 - Music Theater International - what is this for (why is it \$6,000)?

ANSWER: This is licensing rights and production contracts for the theater program previously paid from student accounts. [RICH/PATTIE]

TOPIC: Schools WMS

65. Page 175 - Math Lab 6 has just over 5 students per section. Is it necessary to have 4 sections? Why can't we offer the fewer sections for such a small number of students?

ANSWER: Math Lab enrollment is fluid and flexible. While some students do start off the year in Math Lab and remain for the entire year, others enter or exit based on classroom performance. This was anticipated when we transitioned to this model, allowing all students to achieve at high levels by making time, not learning, the key variable in our math program. We strongly believe that these small class sizes, along with the fact that the instruction is provided by the student's regular math teacher, are key factors in the success of our math program. We believe that for some families, math lab provides their children with the support that they need to be successful at grade level without relying on outside tutors. [KEN/DAN]

66. Page 176 - Math Lab 7 has just over 5 students per section. Is it necessary to have 4 sections? Why can't we offer the fewer sections for such a small number of students?

ANSWER: See answer above. [KEN/DAN]

67. Page 177 - 6 Group Guitar with 10 students per section - is it possible to increase the number of students per section?

ANSWER: Group Guitar is most similar to our small group lessons for our instrumental music program. Unlike Piano Lab, where students wear headsets for their individual practice and have the ability to record on computers, in Group Guitar each student is working on an actual instrument and requires significant individual attention from the teacher. In addition, these numbers are our best guess projections based on historical trends. 6th grade is where we have our lowest level of confidence. Students will make course selections much later in the year. [KEN/DAN]

68. Page 177 - Does 7th grade need 2 project challenge sections?

ANSWER: We keep low class size in Project Challenge to allow for the type of individualized instruction that is a necessary component of this program. Fifteen is our usual cap for this course. If the numbers remain low, we would likely combine the sections and utilize the FTE to offer push-in support of gifted students in their regular education courses. [KEN/DAN]

69. Page 180 - 182 WMS Short Wharf question: Approximately \$27k in revenue less stipends of approximately \$30k and expenses of approximately \$15.4k leaves us with a loss of \$18.4k. Are the student costume fees included in the revenue? Should the participation fee be reviewed? How does the fee compare to the athletics fee? Will the move to capture theater revenues and expenses be instituted this year for remaining shows?

ANSWER: We do not charge students to participate in Theater. All sources of revenue would be deposited into the Theater Receipts account. The additional revenue is due to ticket sales, advertising revenue, concessions that are collected for performances. This revenue exceeds what is paid out to put on the performance by \$11,635 exclusive of stipends. The theater stipends have always been 100% covered by the operating budget. If the BOE wants to consider participation fees for Theater it would be recommended that be reviewed during FY 19 with an implementation in FY 20. [RICH/DAN]

70. Page 198 - 203 WHS Company question - Same theory question as Short Wharf.

ANSWER: See preceding answer relative to Short Wharf. [RICH/ LISA]

71. Page. 174 (Mock Trial) - Will an afternoon program conflict with sports teams? If yes, how many students typically participate in the type of sports that would prohibit

participation in the after school Mock Trial program? What will the cost to students be for the after school program? How much will the stipend be for the program?

ANSWER: Students do have to make choices when it comes to after-school activities and there may be some impact. Robotics would have the same challenge, and yet we have been able to more than double the participation rate. We are concerned about conflicting with Short Wharf rehearsals, during the month of January. At least this year, there seems to be more overlap between Mock Trial and Short Wharf (perhaps 40% of students in Mock Trial participate in Shortwharf this year) than with soccer, football and basketball. On the other hand, by offering Mock Trial after school we will be opening the program up to sixth graders for the first time.

As shown on page 181 the stipend is \$3,206. [KEN/DAN]

72. Page 177 - (WMS) - Grade 7 Project Challenge & Algebra - I notice that both of these course have two sections of very low numbers (7 and 13), did you consider running single sections of the courses?

ANSWER: For Project Challenge, see above question responses. For Algebra, combining sections would put the course at 26, which is above BOE guidelines, not even taking into account the possibility of new students moving into the district who will need this math course. Algebra is also the course that provides the foundation for future success in mathematics courses so a smaller class size would be appropriate.

[KEN/DAN]

73. Page 181 - How many years has OOM been offered at WMS? How many students participate in it?

ANSWER: This is our first year, offered as a pilot. We have 10 students participating: four students in 6th grade, four students in 7th grade, two students in 8th grade.

[KEN/DAN]

74. Page 181 - Can we have the student participation numbers pegged to the activity stipends and Robotics?

ANSWER: Our student participation for Robotics has more than doubled, from 15 students in 2016-17, to 35 students in 2017-18. In addition, we have increased the number of competitions in which our students participate. Participation for all activities fluctuate from year to year and some activities are replaced with others in response to

student interest and advisor availability. The recent Project Challenge Report provides a sample of participation numbers. [KEN/DAN]

75. Page 182 - Robotics stipends and dues together are \$6390 plus \$3000, are other activities also in multiple cost lines and if so, is the total “cost” number for the activity reflected anywhere in the book? (the way theater is)

ANSWER: The major costs for Robotics are the stipend and registration and competition fees. For local competitions, we prefer that students travel by bus which is paid out of the student activities transportation account. For most activities, the major cost is the stipend. Activities that are tightly connected to curriculum (art, robotics) often rely departmental materials budget for supplies. We do have a materials line for student activities as well to support these activities. [KEN/DAN]

76. Page 184 - Do the 48 desks/chairs (\$11K) need to be done this year, or can they wait until next year?

ANSWER: In past years, our furniture replacement plan was cut from the budget. We are looking to replace very old desks that are posing two main concerns. The desks that we are looking to replace have metal legs. The screws at times work themselves loose and we have had issues with desks collapsing. In addition, when students press on the desk tray there is a loud popping noise which is distracting and disruptive. This is the same furniture that requires sound-tampering measures (tennis balls attached to the legs of desks and chairs) to comply with the needs of our hearing impaired special education or 504 students. [RICH/DAN]

77. With the transfer of after school sports to the TOW, rather than reflect a savings, should we not, in all honesty, be speaking of the transfer of the program and funds to the TOW? It's only a savings on paper, and although it is valid, it seems we might take the high road and just talk about a transfer of monies.

ANSWER: No, there is no transfer of funds to the Town of Weston. Weston provides youth sports under a model where the fee they charge to participate covers the cost of the programs they run. There would be no additional cost to the Town by shifting this to the Town from the BOE. This change is a financial savings to the BOE and the Town's tax payer and transfer of responsibility of who runs and manages these activities similar to the programs that are run for Hurlbutt and WIS. [RICH]

78. Page 174 (WMS) - How many students currently participate in the after school sports program? In other districts where Parks and Rec run the program, is it as fully participated in as our WMS program is currently (ie: will we be switching to a less attractive option for the kids)? Will Parks and Rec provide similar offerings? Will the price point/cost to the students be similar to the current cost?

ANSWER: There are 278 student athletes (inclusive of multiple sport athletes) across the following sports (cross country, field hockey, flag football, volleyball, sports and fitness, swimming and track and field). Parks and Rec will provide sports options for those programs that generate interest. They have purposefully not provided MS sports opportunities as we have run our own program and they did not want to conflict with our programs. They do charge a fee to cover the entire cost of operating the program so it is expected that the cost will be closer aligned with what they charge for HES and WIS opportunities, which is greater than the \$25 fee we currently charge per student.

[RICH/DAN]

TOPIC: Schools WHS

79. Page 273 elimination of graduation tent - any feedback from WHS and WMS PTO?

ANSWER: Lisa and Bill shared this news with the senior class officers and advisors on Wednesday, January 10th before the regularly scheduled WHS congress meeting. A letter went out to all high school families from Dr. McKersie on January 11th. This was also forwarded to all students and staff via school email.

Lisa will share this with the PTO at their February 2nd meeting- first with the executive board- Originally it was to be shared on Friday January 5th but the meeting was cancelled because of snow.

This will be a challenging transition, but one that the Superintendent and High School Principal are committed to guiding so it is collaborative and draws on the input of senior and PTO representatives. [BILL/LISA]

80. Page 195 - French 4/4H (27 students)/Mandarin III/H (29 students) and Spanish I (28 students) - these seem large for class size; is the teacher comfortable with the size (I know we ran sections of similar size this year - were they successful?)

ANSWER: World language is challenging in that we are not sure how many students continue to the next level. At this point, we have listed the maximum number of students for French and Mandarin that could be in the section- some may elect not to take the next

year. Spanish I was higher than expected but the class has been going well. Currently we have in place an extra 0.2 in world language allocated to Spanish. This 0.2 may be used in another language and/or level depending on student requests. [KEN/LISA]

81. Page 197 - #3309 - Professional Technical Services is up 243.14% (up \$21,700 to \$30,625) what is covered by this item?

ANSWER: As indicated in the key budget drivers on pg 202, the increase is entirely related to the shift of expenditures from the student activities account to the operating budget for Theater. That amount is \$18,745 with corresponding revenue offsets shown under theater receipts. [RICH/LISA]

82. Page 198 - #7300 - Equipment is up 1,374.87% (\$11,062) for science stools, video tripod and chemical storage equipment, can any of these items be deferred until next year or do they all need to be in this budget?

ANSWER: The science stools have been deferred in the last two budgets. We originally wanted 60 but are requesting 30. We also were going to request art tables- the tables were never replaced when the renovation took place. Our PTO purchased four tables and Weston Art purchased one. We still need three more tables. However, we decided to defer asking for tables and ask for the tripods. The current six tripods are five years old and are showing their age. We must have the chemical storage per our chemical hygiene officer because we will need one for the research program. These chemical storage cabinets have also been recognized as a need by CIRMA. [RICH/LISA]

83. Page 199 - Can we have the student numbers associated with the activities/club for each stipend?

ANSWER:

Company: 100 Cast and Crew and 25 Pit

Musical Producer

Drama Producer

Musical Director

Drama Director

Set Construction Musical

Set Construction Drama

Set Decoration Musical

Set Decoration Drama

Pit Conductor

Vocal Director

Choreographer

Accompanist

Musical Stage Mgr.

Drama Stage Mgr.

Backstage Drama Mgr.

Backstage Musical Mgr.

Lighting Supvr. Musical

Lighting Supvr. Drama

Sound Supvr. Musical

Sound Supvr. Drama

Costumer Musical

Costumer Drama

Marching Pep Band: 35 students

Literary Magazine: 19 assembly team/44 artists

Newspaper Advisor: 15-20

Cancer Club: 56

Honor Society: 51

National Arts Society: 33

Model UN: 15

Key Club: 27

UNICEF: 15

Math League: 8
TV Studio: 10
A Capella: 30
Mock Trial: 44
Science Olympiad: 22
Marching Band Memorial: 110
Art with Heat: 10
Tri M Honor Society: 70
Latin Honor Society: 28
French Honor Society: 22
Chinese Honor Society: 20
Spanish Honor Society: 43
Robotics Club: 40
[RICH/LISA]

TOPIC: SECURITY

84. Page 24- 4th paragraph- is there documented "proof" to support the "seamless relationship with the Weston Police Department"- only we know how dysfunctional it truly was.

ANSWER: Since the town hired their new police chief in September of 2017, we have seen a considerable positive change in policing within our district. Some examples of this are:

- 1) Increased accessibility of the police chief (friendly and approachable)
- 2) Willingness to meet, listen and discuss both sides of any district concerns and fully explain why decisions are made.
- 3) Increase in police patrols within the district and more visibility of officers (officers are now stopping into the schools)
- 4) If the chief is in the area, he takes the opportunity to stop in and ask if everything is ok and he or his officers can help in any way
- 5) Increased police attendance in district safety meetings
- 6) Police Chief takes the time to personally attend scheduled drills at schools.
- 7) Police chief is in constant contact (several times a week) with our security director.
- 8) Police Administrators (Chief and Captain) are very involved in improving two way radio communications for district staff.

None of this has had any overtime ramifications, nor would we expect it to as no officers are being brought in beyond their schedules to do so. [RICH/JOE]

85. Page 278 Could we publicly talk about the Police Chief and Superintendent Relationship, and access to parents if concerns come up? Are we confident about how overtime issues will be managed?

ANSWER: We have met with the Police Chief and Captain Brodacki and both are more than fine with us speaking publicly about the much improved relationship between the Weston PD and the Weston BOE and their support of our recommended changes in security. There has not been and we do not anticipate any overtime implications from the increased WPD presence.. [RICH/BILL]

86. Page 280 where we show a reduction of \$25,289 (31%) for the Mile of Safety. Is this a change in the MOU, and doesn't it stand to reason that there could be increased costs with change from 8 to 6 FTE security specialists for "other coverage"?

ANSWER: There is no MOU for the Mile of Safety. This reduction as discussed after last year's budget was finalized, as well as during the Finance Committee this year, when we reviewed the Pro-Forma as well as the transfers that the BOE approved this year related to the change that the Police Department implemented when they began reducing there OT budget. The donut hole in mile of safety was eliminated, bringing the mile of safety billing down from 60% of 9 hours a day to 60% of 6 hours a day. This reduction has already taken place during FY 2018 and represents unused funds that would be a budget reduction as these funds would not be needed. There would also be no additional cost from the Weston Police Department with two security guards eliminated as there is no additional presence required on campus beyond mile of safety, Captain Brodacki, whose office is in the Annex, and the SRO. The increase in presence is the WPD being more available and visible. There is no cost to this. [RICH]

87. Page 281 refers to 2 FTE security guards @ \$78,818, elsewhere, on page 309 it refers to \$87,000. Also, shows increase to overtime to cover critical times at \$6690. Concerns as to how this is all explained and operational.

ANSWER: The \$78,818 represents the salaries for the two security guards. As is the case with all employees, there are fringe benefits such as FICA and pension costs, which are reflected in the district wide budget. When reducing these two positions, we also receive savings in these two areas. The increase in overtime is to provide coverage for HES and WIS through 4:30pm on days in which programs are run that necessitate security.

Currently, with two security guards the schedules are staggered so there is no overtime necessary. With one guard there would be a need for additional overtime to have effective coverage for that additional hour a day. [RICH]

TOPIC: SPECIAL EDUCATION & PPS

88. As part of the overall 2019 budget presentation, can the BOE get a more detailed presentation on the entire SPED budget and how the administration is looking to manage the out of district SPED budget problem through the investment requests in the 2019 budget?

ANSWER: This will be a part of the presentation of the 16th. [LOIS/RICH]

89. I hope there is a deep discussion of the new 5 SPED proposed jobs. In the discussion of a second Assistant Director, there needs to be a discussion as to the reality of a non-WAA person who could do all the support while allowing the current assistant to -12. I totally appreciate the presentation, and I can accept it, but the optics of adding another WAA administrator is a flash point perhaps, and a concern.

ANSWER: We are requesting four new positions and this request will be explained in detail in the formal budget presentation on 1.16.18.. With regard to a WAA versus non WAA staff position, the cost difference would not be considerable, and hiring a WAA level staff position means that they can provide complete staff evaluations and supervision. [LOIS]

90. Pages 153 & 149 - General - Given the higher numbers for this year in the budget combined with the fact that Weston is currently #1 in the DRG for District Admin, could we postpone hiring of the second SpEd Assistant Director for a year to see how the new Director envisions the department and the needs therein? (Weston went from #6 in DRG at \$699 in 2014 to #1 at \$1082 in 2015). Also pg 216 - Could the current Assistant Director take over both lower schools and WMS freeing up some of the Director's time in the next year (eg leaving the Director only WHS)?

ANSWER: As indicated in a previous response, the DRG comparison published by the State and shown in the budget book are not an apples to apples comparison and the PPS figure published by the State also includes program improvement costs, which are not a part of our PPS budget. Items such as portion of the salaries of the Director of Digital Learning, Assistant Superintendent and portions of the Technology lease are included in

these state published figures. It would be an inaccurate comparison to measure the structure and staffing of the PPS department by using the DRG issued state data.

We had discussed the possibility of a phase in plan, but based on extensive analysis we concluded it will be even more important to go ahead with the Assistant Director position now in order to allow for a new Director to have the time to addresses the current needs as well as have a successful transition to the district. The suggestion of putting more responsibilities on the current Assistant Director position puts us back in the same place of not being able to address the current student and staff needs that will be addressed in the presentation. It will prevent us from solving the root problems of program oversight we have identified in our analysis. [LOIS/RICH]

91. Can we make a case for the DRG comparatives for the Director of PPS/SPED market adjustment- wouldn't it be helpful to us in this document?

ANSWER: The chart below provides the data:

Here are the salaries for DRG A plus Greenwich for the Director of PPS/SPED.

Darien	\$	202,966
ER9	\$	150,000
Greenwich	\$	194,162
New Canaan	\$	208,157
Ridgefield	\$	194,563
Weston	\$	167,425
Westport	\$	198,141
Wilton	\$	185,000
Average	\$	187,552

[LEWIS/LOIS]

92. What is the difference between a BCBA specialist and a BCBA analyst?

ANSWER: A BCBA is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst specifically certified in behavioral management techniques and may supervise a behavioral specialist. A behavioral specialist has all the training of a BCBA but has not completed the final certifications and is hired at a lower rate. [LOIS]

93. Page 217 - Has there been a cost analysis of MS ESS vs. the costs and steps being recommended with the additional social worker and BCBA? It would be a logical question.

ANSWER: No. Given that ESS has indicated they cannot expand into the MS at this time, there is no way to undergo a cost benefit analysis as that option is not available to us. In addition, even if ESS could expand into the MS it would not negate the needs of a dedicated Social Worker at the MS and HS, additional behavioral support services at all four schools and strengthened administrative oversight to better address students currently out of district, attending PPT's, provide quality assurance to all SPED services to help prevent unilateral agreements and to provide support to students with behavior issues and students with transitional issues. We have dug deep into the special education issues and the root causes of many of the issues we face. ESS alone (even if expanded to the MS, which it cannot) does not begin to address all the areas identified as root concerns. If we are to tackle the special education crisis we face, we must address support services for students and parents as it relates to social and emotional behavior, the difficulties students face when transitioning grades, quality assurance of our special education services, preparation for due process and PPT's (which an administrator is required to attend under CSG 10-76ee) and the use of technology for special education students. We will address this in the budget presentation (1.16.18), but for now know we have looked heavily at the data of why students are being outplaced (72% with behavioral and emotional issues make the overwhelming amount of outplacements/agreements) and transitional issues through grades (72% 5th to 12th).

The ESS administration weighed in on this question to state that similar cost analysis requests have been made by other districts that ESS is in and all of them found that costs for providing the types of services that ESS provides would be much higher. Understand that ESS is not an individual counselor or a "rent a therapist." ESS has been referred to as a tier 3 intervention for students who are at risk of going to an out of district placement or returning from one. The mission of ESS is accomplished by bringing in a mental health system of psychiatric expertise that includes: proven treatment protocols, experienced mental health professionals, clinical supervision and quality management activities so that struggling students can stay in district and thrive in the public school setting.

****Additional information can be found in a powerpoint update ESS has provided us. It is being shared as an exhibit with this Q&A document, and will be distributed at the budget presentation (1.16.18). [LOIS/RICH]**

94. Pages 189 - 191 - As I look at the demands on the counselors, I wonder if ESS is currently the right fit for our district. Clearly it is a wonderful program but given the costs and limited students it is able to serve and narrow scope of target diagnosis, do we need to consider whether those funds are better dedicated to generalists on staff in house (eg could we get more professional who could treat more students with more types of issues that way)? Also on page 19 #3 it sounds as if the biggest needs are in grades 5-8, so does it make sense to deploy the funding there? [Please note that I am not advocating a position so much as asking if we should reassess to be certain we still have best use of resources and best fit of program] PLEASE SEE MY QUESTION BELOW PG 217

ANSWER: The answer to the previous questions addresses this question as well. Additionally, we estimate that 3-4 of the students that ESS has worked with this year and last year would have been lost to an out-placement, if they had not been in the program. This is a direct cost savings for the district that far exceeds the cost of ESS (approximately \$100k per student for one year would be a \$300-400k cost savings). ESS does not have a narrow diagnostic focus and will work with any student who presents with psychiatric and/or behavioral issues.

ESS provides an added value in the form of Professional Development opportunities with speakers who are free of charge who can train teaching staff and para educators, advancing our team's understanding of psychiatric illnesses. [LOIS]

95. Page 217 - It is stated that ESS has reduced outplacements because there have been no unilateral outplacements at WHS last year, but were there any outplacements of students in the program? Or waiting for the program? What was the cost of the ESS contract for last year? How many unilateral outplacements of ESS population would we have seen on average in a year over the past five years (eg what was the assumed avoidance last year)?

ANSWER: There were no outplacements last year or this year of students who were in the ESS program. The contract last year was \$275,000. We have seen approximately 2-3 unilateral placements over the past five years. Several of those were students in 8th grade who would be transitioning to the HS. [LOIS]

96. Page 217 - In describing the cost avoidance provided by the ESS program, summer services are listed as additional costs to outplacements which are avoided, but does ESS provided them for the students who stay in district or do we provide them or is the need arguably avoided (trying to understand the justification description provided)?

ANSWER: ESS provides ESY (extended school year or summer) services free of charge for Weston students two times a week for five weeks during the summer. These services go a long way in providing support for our at-risk students during the unstructured time of the summer. The cost savings to the district is seen in the fact that most outplacements are 12 month programs, which means they remain full time in the program for July and August which is a considerably higher cost. [LOIS]

97. Page 217 - Returning to my question from above about the fit of ESS currently with our district. If we are seeing that ESS is the right fit, does it make sense to ask to have a provider from their program move down into WMS rather than adding a social worker into the WHS? Also on page 19 #3 it sounds as if the biggest needs are in grades 5-8, so does it make sense to deploy the funding there? If the emotional needs area is where we are truly having the greatest problems and ESS is the right fit, then perhaps this is a pathway we should explore? Then you would have ESS at both schools and keep the shared social worker rather than add a social worker to WHS and only have ESS at WHS. If we are re-configuring the layout, we should take time and care to be certain we are setting it up optimally from the start. I also question whether the new director should have a hand in this decision?

ANSWER: As mentioned in previous questions, ESS is not simply providing a “therapist” and so dividing the therapist between the two schools does dilute the program. This year ESS has taken a few 8th grade student referrals from the MS in order to complete evaluations and make recommendations for families. If the students are appropriate for the program, they will also see these students for individual therapy and recommend the summer as well in order to provide a successful transition to the HS. [LOIS]

98. Page 216 - BCBA: given the difficult budget year we are facing, can we manage with the current 3 BCBA's on staff and defer the 4th BCBA until the following year? (\$71,718)

ANSWER: No. As we will show in the budget presentation (1.16.18), the main driver of our out of district and unilateral placement costs is due to social and emotional behavior, which is directly addressed in district by BCBA's. The need for a BCBA is entirely related to addressing the root causes for growing out of district costs. If one out of district

placement is saved, this position will have paid for itself. Also, we will have three BCBA's and one behavior specialist, which is at a reduced cost. [LOIS/RICH]

99. Page 221 #5600 - These are the actual outplacement costs, but can we also have the budgeted costs?

ANSWER: Assuming you mean the actual costs for FY 18, they currently are projected at \$2,878,573 as of November. [LOIS/RICH]

100. Page 225 - Professional Services #B. Supervision Support for the BCBA's in house: is this increased in anticipation of the addition of the fourth BCBA? If so, what would it be if we delayed the addition for a year?

ANSWER: This anticipated increase is to finalize the transition from the previous contracted service provider. Additionally, there are some students on the Autism Spectrum who require additional after school speech services. [LOIS]

101. Page 226 - Assistive Technology - do these chromebooks stay in SpEd or do they follow the students? Are they accounted for by reducing the number asked for in the request for the students' corresponding grades? Do the iPads follow the students? Do we purchase a new group every year?

ANSWER: Assistive Technology is provided upon the recommendation of the professional staff through various evaluations for both IEP related recommended interventions as well as 504 related interventions. When an intervention is identified it is normally then piloted real time with the student to ensure the intervention will be successful. If the intervention proves successful, a Chromebook or iPad is permanently assigned to the student until the intervention is no longer required. This can last from months to years, or even the student's entire education career. The piloting process also requires that we keep a small inventory of devices, approximately three, that can be quickly deployed during the pilot phase referenced above. Identified students who currently have devices assigned to them will not be included in the purchases for the various technology implementations. Students who are assigned or have access to a device through one of the implementations at the WIS, HES or WHS are not provided an additional device but use the device currently available to them. Being able to have special needs students on the same platform as all of the other students is a huge advantage and benefit to doing it in this fashion. This helps support all of our students positive identify. We purchase devices regularly for various reasons including students

that are identified for interventions that have not been in the past, students who's interventions change and require a different device, as well as to replace devices that are broken beyond repair.

There are some Special Education and 504 students who require a Chromebook or iPad that is directly designated for them. This is usually due to specific software that they need and is often because they are non-verbal students and use the device for communication. That device does follow the student as they move through the grades, but it belongs to the district, so if the student leaves the device stays here. [LOIS/CRAIG]

102. Pg 228 - What is the difference between an out of district placement and an out of district agreement?

ANSWER: An out of district placement is one where the district places the student and assumes the total cost. These placements are generally because the student has significant cognitive and behavioral issues and often has aggressive behaviors that the district cannot address. Previously, there have been some students that the district placed because of psychiatric issues, but the ESS program assists us in reducing these placements. An out of district agreement is when the parent unilaterally places the student and then asks the district to pay for the placement through the mediation process, which will be described in the presentation. [LOIS]

103. Pg 231 - One of the justifications provided for needing the second Assistant Director of SpEd is the new state law requirements for seeking reimbursements for eligible services (OT/PT nursing etc). There is also a discussion of contracting out any work under reimbursement claims. How many potential students would Weston have (eg - how large a workload would this create realistically for your district). This actually sounds more like a first year learning curve at the provider level (eg for the nurses and OT/Pt etc) and the admin assistant who would be tracking it not the director so I am confused - unless this would be different from billing generally?

ANSWER: This is a new mandate from the state department with regard to reimbursement for Medicaid services for eligible students. As we are at the preliminary stages of this process, we do not know the number of students this would entail as that is confidential information that we will get from the state once we become a provider. It is a complicated system, involving an administrative assistant, but there is a lot of information regarding specific student services that would need to be managed by an assistant director. [LOIS]

104. On page 221, line item 6140, Software for Special Education reads as if it is a new expense (100% growth over last year). But I know we have used some of these software programs in the past. Where have they shown up before and is that reflected as a savings on that line item in this year's budget?

ANSWER: Software was previously coded to the Technology budget. Every year when we do the ED001, we have to reclassify these expenditures to Special Education. As such, they have been removed from Technology and properly coded to Special Education. [LOIS/CRAIG/RICH]

105. Page 235 OT/PT Services of \$150,000 listed under professional & technical services - why are these services differentiated as PPS instead of SPED? How are these services allocated throughout the district?

ANSWER: This distinction comes from the state department, which determines which positions are designated where. OT/PT staff are licensed by the public health department and provide more medically based services. Also, they are not part of the teachers union. [LOIS]

106. General question regarding the hiring of a 1.0 FTE Social Worker position at WMS. Can you please walk me through the thinking in taking this approach vs. expanding the ESS program down to WMS?

ANSWER: ESS is unable to at this point expand into the Middle School. We have looked at the root causes of many of our outplacements and unilateral agreements and two key areas are reflected in the data (which we will share at the presentation on 1.16.18) and that is social and emotional behavior and difficulties during transitions from 5th to MS and MS to HS. Having dedicated social workers at the MS and HS will provide a greater level of direct clinical support to students and families. [LOIS]

107. Are there ways we can be more quantitative in reporting the potential variability in the most significant expense items (i.e. SPED Out of District Placements and unilateral Agreements)? This would help BOE and Weston BOF to better understand what level of conservatism is built into the budget on those items and anticipate the probability and magnitude of unexpected expense items that in aggregate could not be absorbed through district expense transfers.

ANSWER: We are including in the budget presentation (1.16.18) specifically quantitative statistics about many of the underlying causes of our out of district placement and unilateral agreements. However, in terms of the variability of these expenses, the average outplacement cost is \$105,905 and the average unilateral agreement is \$50,000 with the total average within the tuition account at \$76,000. A shift in just seven students could result in over a \$500,000 unexpected budgetary expense or 1% of our operating budget even though seven students represents only 0.31% of our total enrollment. The variability typically comes from unilateral placements as we have no control over whether a parent will seek a unilateral placement, but we are then responsible for the cost and the burden both in terms of finances and time of managing this placements. The variability of outplacements made by the district is far less as we do know who these students are and we can potentially forecast those who might be moving towards a district recommended outplacement. In contrast, a unilateral agreement due to the burden of proof is largely beyond our control. [LOIS/RICH]

108. On page 285, line item 5101 shows an increase of roughly \$45,000 in SPED transportation costs. Are we able to mitigate any of those increased costs using our internal fleet?

ANSWER: We have mitigated as much as we can, but due to the substantial increase in special education out of district placements and unilateral agreements, we have had to participate in ride shares with other districts and as such we share the cost. Also included are agreements to reimburse transportation costs for these unilateral agreements. [LOIS/RICH]

109. Page 31 - #5101 SpEd Transportation - why is this item up 97.33%?

ANSWER: This is a direct result of out of district placements and unilateral agreements. Many unilateral agreements call for reimbursement for transportation costs. Due to the large increase in out of district placements, we have rideshare agreements with other districts who also send students to the same facility and we share the cost. This increase is also reflected in the FY 18 financials. [LOIS/RICH]

110. Page 285 - #5101 - Why is SpEd transportation up so much? (It is \$92,185/ up \$45,486) can we find more ways to share with other districts or are the distances too great?

ANSWER: This is entirely due to the increase in out of district placement and unilateral agreements This number does include many rideshare agreements with other districts to

provide these services. If we did not share these costs with other districts as we are doing this year and proposed next year this cost would be double the increase. We have also maxed out the usage of the district vehicles that we purchased. These are used primarily for the students that the district has out-placed. [LOIS/RICH]

TOPIC: TEXT CORRECTIONS

111. There is text missing at the bottom of page 308 in the last answer section.

ANSWER: We will send a page correction.

112. Page 24- first paragraph insert '\$' before the number of 24,717.

ANSWER: We will send a page correction.

113. Page 188 - TYPOS - first para - extra period. Second para - first sentence does not read right: I think perhaps, the word “are” is unnecessary.

ANSWER: We will send a page correction.

114. Page 250 - Where is the footnote to correspond to the “1”?

ANSWER: We will send a page correction.

115. On page 308 the last sentence has been cut off. The suspense is killing me.

ANSWER: We will send a page correction. It should say in FY 19.

TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION

116. Page 285 First Student Contract increase of 2.53% is this as expected per contract? When does our current contract expire? What are approximate increases for future years?

ANSWER: Yes, this is a contractual increase with First Student and represents a 2.7% increase. The net account only increases 2.53% as we received a reimbursement for religious shuttles. The contract with First Student ends at the end of FY 20, which also includes a 2.7% increase. We should expect the contractual increase after this contract is

put out to bid to be in excess of 2.7% as the state average of new transportation contracts is approximately 3.5%. [RICH/DAVE]

END